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# News Release

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## **Hurricane Katrina: Rapid Needs Assessment**

Today, EPA emergency responders are taking part in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's rapid needs assessment to identify potential environmental and public health threats caused by the hurricane. The two EPA teams are using helicopters to fly-over industrial and municipal facilities located in Southern Louisiana. Aerial inspections will be used to identify and prioritize follow up action by on-site personnel. Aerial inspections may take several days to complete. Communication with our field teams during this period is extremely limited. EPA will release detailed information from the assessment as it becomes available.

Today, EPA has deployed the ASPECT aircraft to provide additional data for inclusion in the on-going needs assessment. The aircraft was moved from Waxahachie, Texas to an airstrip in Louisiana earlier today. The aircraft is expected to begin collecting information later today.

EPA has not been notified of any major spills or releases in Louisiana as a result of the hurricane. Business and industry should report spills or releases to the National Response Center at (800) 424-8802. Louisiana Department of Health and Human Services has issued notices for boiling water in certain areas. We continue to encourage consumers to follow the guidance provided by their state and local officials.

EPA will continue to provide information as it becomes available. Reporters should contact the EPA Press Office at (214) 665-2200 for interviews and additional information.